

**From:** Liz Vogel  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 1:00pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed settlement in the Microsoft anti-trust case.

As a computer professional, I routinely work with Microsoft products -- not because they are the best for the tasks at hand, but because they are so ubiquitous in the industry as to be unavoidable. I frequently encounter novice users who think that Microsoft Windows and a computer are the same thing, who believe that Internet Explorer *\*is\** the internet, who don't realize that there are alternatives to Word, PowerPoint, or Access, let alone have ever tried these alternatives. The proposed settlement will do nothing to address this monopoly of the public mind; the average computer user will still see Windows, Internet Explorer, Office, and all the rest as a package that they have no choice but to accept.

Many small companies have offered products that are superior to the equivalent Microsoft offerings. Most of these companies have been bought out or driven out of business by Microsoft's restrictive OEM licensing, deliberate introduction of "bugs" that only affect non-Microsoft software, and other unethical actions. The proposed settlement will not significantly redress these past wrongs. Many of the remaining competitors are fighting economic and even legal battles for their continued existence -- not because their products are inferior, but because Microsoft's pockets are deeper. The proposed settlement will not adequately level the playing field for these companies; indeed, depending on how some of the terminology of the settlement is interpreted, it may even end up endorsing the status quo. Most significantly, the proposed settlement fails to provide effective enforcement options and meaningful penalties to dissuade Microsoft from continuing its anti-competitive and unfair business practices in the future.

I urge you to discard the proposed settlement, as it does not serve the public interest.

-Liz Vogel  
U.S. Citizen